



## Finn's cousin Jake died of cancer when they were both fifteen. They were close.

Following Jake's death, Finn withdrew from the activities he had liked to do with him. Teachers noticed he was quieter at school and didn't play football at lunchtimes. He continued to attend school, but his grades began to slip. When asked he told school staff and his parents that he was 'ok' but school and parents were concerned as he seem to be 'withdrawn and bottling things up'. Parents observed angry outbursts at home that they felt were out of character.

### 'Bored and lonely'

After a referral from his parents, a FiG Family Support Officer (FSO) met Finn in school. Initially he said he didn't want to talk but, following an art activity, he asked to meet again. Finn met the FSO four times in school and, as part of this, started to talk to a member of the pastoral team about how much he missed Jake and how "boring and lonely" it felt mountain biking on his own and "not the same" playing football without him.



### Our approach

The FSO arranged for Finn to take part in an outdoor activity programme with other bereaved young people. Finn was initially hesitant, but after the first session had connected with some peers and was keen to come back the next week. He reported "lighting campfires and going on the climbing wall was cool. Sometimes I don't think about Jake when I'm outside – on the climbing wall you have to concentrate on not falling off! I feel better when I'm outside and doing things with people who get it, and get me."



Finn's Mum and Dad were able to chat with the FiG support worker and other bereaved parents while Finn was climbing and shared that this was validating and helpful.



Finn is noticeably happier at school now and will seek out a member of the pastoral team if he is having a bad day. His parents share that he is talking about his feelings and has put a photograph of him and Jake on their bikes in his bedroom. Finn is hoping to attend some surf-sessions for bereaved young people in the summer, with a friend he made during the outdoor activities sessions.

Mum shared that "Finn is talking more and is less angry. He isn't stuck in his bedroom all the time now. He still misses Jake, we all do, so much, but we can talk about happy times as well as about how much we miss him."